

To the People of the United States:

MONTICELLO was the home of Thomas Jefferson.
Monticello is today his tomb.

But it is private property, and suffers the desecration of sometimes being lived in.

It is subject to the uncertainties and transfers of individual fortune and the various casualties attendant upon all private property.

The VENERATED REMAINS there are subject to the uncertainties of private fortune.

The dwelling there is exposed to the dangers and risks incident to private occupation.

Reverence and veneration lead all citizens passing within its reach to visit the grave and dwelling of Thomas Jefferson, but, it being in the hands of a private proprietor, public curiosity and interest are, of necessity, very imperfectly gratified.

Even access to Jefferson's grave is subject to the fancy of private individuals, who thus control the right of American pilgrimage to a SHRINE which should be as sacred as it should be free.

PRESERVED LIKE MOUNT VERNON.

Monticello should be preserved the same as Washington's Mount Vernon, as Jackson's Hermitage, as Lee's Arlington, as Grant's Tomb, as Lincoln's humble Kentucky cabin.

It should be honored and set up on high in the midst of the affections of the people.

More than half a century has elapsed since Jefferson's death—half a century of neglect and ingratitude to his memory.

The remains of the AUTHOR OF OUR INDEPENDENCE have lain unhonored, and by the irony of fate left to private property and accessible to the processions of thousands of people who visit here yearly only through the forbearance of its owner.

Now the day has come when the people of the United States wish to have forever and at all times, for themselves and their children, a legal and indisputable right to visit the grounds, home, and grave of Thomas Jefferson.

The day has come when there is a national purpose of causing Monticello to become the property of the nation in perpetuity, of making it a spot consecrated to patriotism, of establishing it as an enduring remembrance of Thomas Jefferson, and of suitably developing it that those who go on pilgrimages there may no longer be shocked by the ghastly traces of a nation's neglect of its glorious dead.

THE UNITED STATES SENATE, a Republican body, has passed unanimously a resolution favoring an inquiry into the purchase of Monticello.

In this triumphant day of Democracy, surely there need be no appeal made to the House of Congress to honor Thomas Jefferson, the Father of their party; surely there is not one member of the Democratic House, now flushed with victory, who would refuse this little request for a committee to consider the wisdom and ways and means of acquiring the home and grave of Thomas Jefferson.

Surely there is not one member who will hesitate to join in the universal wish of the American people to honor the home and grave of Jefferson, and give it the place of honor in the nation due it, alongside the homes and graves of Washington, Jackson, Lincoln, and Lee.

Surely the Democrats will not permit any delay and will not prevent, in this Renaissance Day of Democracy, a consideration of the purchase of this hallowed spot.

We believe it is more desirable to acquire Monticello by voluntary grant than by condemnation.

And we feel with the fullest confidence that the present proprietor of Monticello could not or would not resist the overtures of the people to make Monticello a shrine any more than John Augustine Washington could resist the overtures of the people to make Mount Vernon a shrine.

Surely, we believe there is no man who would deprive Jefferson of the distinction that rightfully belongs to him of having his tomb occupy the position of honor in the nation due it—alongside Washington's, Jackson's, Lincoln's, and Lee's.

Surely, we believe that the present proprietor of Monticello will not fail to recognize the propriety of public ownership of such a sacred spot, where thousands of people go every year to pay homage to Thomas Jefferson.

We believe he will not be hostile to the nation's effort to preserve and suitably honor Jefferson's home and grave, but will listen to the call of the people to honor this Jeffersonian shrine.

A CALL TO THE PEOPLE.

Therefore, believing and hoping this, we call urgently upon the country to do quickly what it has decided must be done, that it may in future have no occasion to mourn over fatal delay or hear the reproach of posterity for want of zeal in transmitting to them, well preserved, so precious a patrimony.

Let there be a call of patriotism throughout the whole land!

Let us redeem the home and grave of Jefferson, and surround it with a preservative guard and maintain it with sacred care!

Let all who enjoy the efforts wrought by Jefferson unite to restore Jefferson to the people, where he belongs, and to place under the guardianship of the whole Nation his unpretentious resting place!

Let the voice of the people speak—and may it not fall upon deaf ears! A word would set all right—but that word has not yet been spoken!

However, we would not be discouraged or baffled in our work of preserving for all future generations the home and grave of Jefferson, but would triumph!

If the plea of patriotism, made for patriotism, to a man whose position should make him a patriot, remains unanswered; if the wish of the whole country to honor a man who honored the whole country is denied by a man who can honor the whole country; if personal pride in proprietorship and individual love of the ownership of that which can never be individual will defeat the purpose and disappoint the hope of the whole Nation, even then do not be discouraged! For in the bosom of this Nation there is a sovereignty—as old as the Nation itself, vindicated by its highest courts, sustained by its ablest jurists, and known of all its public men—which will enable us to turn our wishes into demands, our pleas into legal appeals, and, in the name and for the good of the spirit of patriotism, we shall take, by right of eminent domain, for the use of the Nation today, tomorrow, and forever, this place which holds the name of the Nation's Builder and marks the scene of the work that he did in its building.

I do not propose that the Nation take the home of the proprietor of Monticello. He is not a descendant of Thomas Jefferson any more than his brother Napoleon is a descendant of Bonaparte. His home is in New York, where he was born, where he was educated, where he lives, where he votes, and from where he is elected to Congress.

But I propose that, if necessary, the Nation take the home of Thomas Jefferson—the home which he built, which he inhabited, and which he surrounded with history and tradition; a home which speaks of him only, and which was open to the people of this country day and night as long as he lived; a home in which no other man can have identity; a home which is now no home. Its doors are shut, its windows are dark, and there is no life in the place.

Thousands of pilgrims who go there from all over the world must turn away without crossing its threshold or seeing the rooms in which Jefferson lived and died. It is a home of no use to any one. It was the home of Jefferson in life, and it is now his home in death. It must never be put to the ignominious service of giving distinction and satisfaction to any one who simply happens to hold title to it, but it must be used for the beautiful purpose of inspiring us to serve our country as Jefferson did. To take it would only be taking the title of Mr. Levy, but the home of Thomas Jefferson.

Let us all work together to honor the memory of Thomas Jefferson.

Surely, since the Republican Senate has voted unanimously to honor and to inquire into the preservation of the home and grave of Thomas Jefferson; surely, since a Republican National Convention, assembled in Chicago, passed a resolution of endorsement of this glorious cause, and since the people of the United States, through their petitions, are daily expressing their desire to redeem the home and grave of Thomas Jefferson from private ownership; surely, the party of Jefferson could do no less.

Mo. Martin D. Putnam